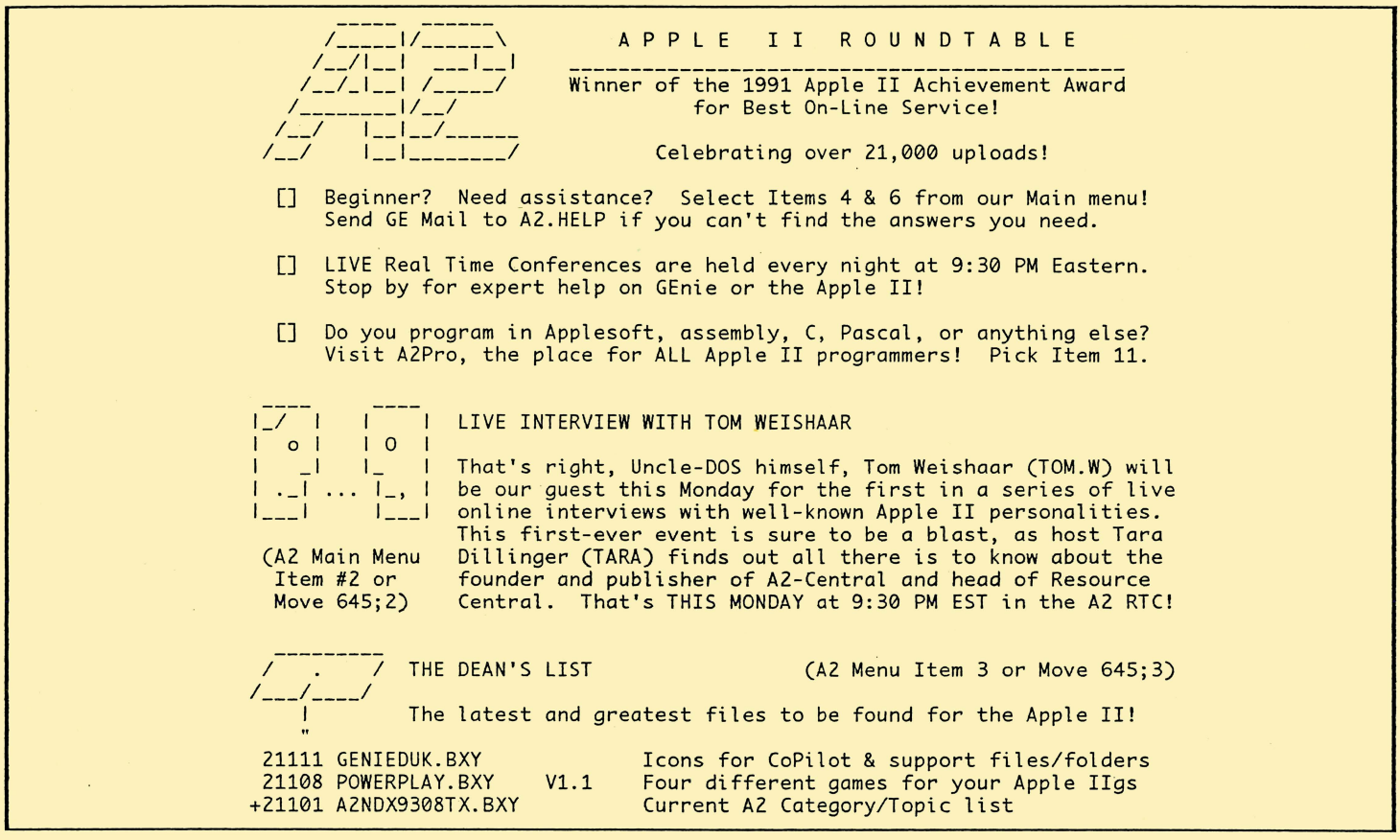
Online Services for the Apple II


A P P L E I I R O U N D T A B L E
Winner of the 1991 Apple II Achievement Award
for Best On-Line Service!
Celebrating over 21,000 uploads!
[] Beginner? Need assistance? Select Items 4 & 6 from our Main menu!
Send GE Mail to A2.HELP if you can't find the answers you need.
[] LIVE Real Time Conferences are held every night at 9:30 PM Eastern.
Stop by for expert help on GEnie or the Apple II!
[] Do you program in Applesoft, assembly, C, Pascal, or anything else?
Visit A2Pro, the place for ALL Apple II programmers! Pick Item 11.
LIVE INTERVIEW WITH TOM WEISHAAR
That's right, Uncle-DOS himself, Tom Weishaar (TOM.W) will
be our guest this Monday for the first in a series of live
online interviews with well-known Apple II personalities.
This first-ever event is sure to be a blast, as host Tara
(A2 Main Menu Dillinger (TARA) finds out all there is to know about the
Item #2 or founder and publisher of A2-Central and head of Resource
Move 645;2) Central. That's THIS MONDAY at 9:30 PM EST in the A2 RTC!
THE DEAN'S LIST (A2 Menu Item 3 or Move 645;3)
The latest and greatest files to be found for the Apple II!
21111 GENIEDUK.BXY Icons for CoPilot & support files/folders
21108 POWERPLAY.BXY V1.1 Four different games for your Apple IIgs
+21101 A2NDX9308TX.BXY Current A2 Category/Topic list

Online telecommunication services, like GEnie, offer Apple II users a wealth of information. This issue's Test Drive features GEnie's A2 and A2pro RoundTable groups, the first of a series of reports covering the various Apple II online services. We'll tell you what you can expect from each, and in the end pick the best service for Apple II users.

THE PASSPORT HOUSE LETTER

Journal of Apple II Development • September 1993

In this Issue:

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- Letters from Readers
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- Issue Details
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Service Test Drive
- A look at the A2 and A2Pro support groups on GEnie. It's the first in a series of articles covering Apple II onlines

Special Report: Getting Started Online
- Help and instruction for anyone interested in getting online, with a special look at minimizing costs

The Passport House Catalog
- The first F-Volume releases
- The Readers' Listings
- CD jewel cases for 3.5" disks

New Product Reports
- Paper Free
- GNO/ME 2.0
- MODZap
- What's up DOC?
- QuicKare+ & Drive-Check

The Late News
- New source for C.V. Tech products
- DuelTris now available from BRCC
- Special offers from Vitesse, Inc
- A Bug in the Bug Fix
- Updates on the Horizon
- Sound & the ROM 01 IIGS
- New NoiseTracker 1.2?

A couple of readers answer the question "What's the Passport House Letter?" online GEnie in the following comments:

P.PAVLICKO says:
I receive it and I'm very pleased with it. It's a 12-14 page newsletter about the Apple II development, product reviews, new product reports, and articles like 'The Great Disk Drive' which went into detail with just about everything you wanted to know about Disk Drives of all sorts.
I recommend it!

R.DIAS responds:
>> I receive it and I'm very pleased with it
I'll second that. It may seem a bit pricey but I feel it contains information not found elsewhere.

Dear Passport People,

Enclosed please find my check for $24 to extend my subscription for another 12 issues of your fine newsletter.

I find that with your letter, Joe Kohn's letter, II Alive and the sporadic issue of Scarlett, I have about all the A-2 reading material I can handle each month. And it is all of a superior quality. Include a disk from A2-Central each month and a daily call to GEnie, and I havn't much time to even boot up Bozo the clone anymore.

This sure is a neat hobby. Thanks for being part of it.

Dave Johnson
Arleta, CA

Passport House,

I have been a subscriber to your newsletter since April. So far, I have each issue from the premier to the May issue and have been very satisfied with them. But unfortunately, a few problems have developed with my subscription. I have begun my subscription with the intent of having the issues mailed to my college campus address. There were no problems with this arrangement until the school year ended and I returned home to my permanent address. I had gone through most of the summer expecting the issued to be forwarded back to this location. Instead, I have not received any of the issues since the last issue I got, which was the May issue. I later learned that all non-first class mail does not get forwarded to a student's permanent address. Therefore, every issue I was to receive since the May issue has been lost. I regret, very much, not finding this out sooner. In any case, to prevent problems like this from ever occurring again, I would like, from now on, to have future issues sent to my address listed above.

Since I have also lost all my issues since May, I would also like to know if back issues are available. I would like to say again that I enjoy your publication very much and I regret that this problem came about. I hope that the problem could be resolved quickly and I will eagerly await all future issues of the Passport House Letter. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Shinya Nagashima
Bayside, NY

Yes, the US Post Office does destroy all Third Class mail with an expired address, even if you give them a forwarding address. They'll forward First Class mail for a year and Second Class for a month or two, but we're not able to send the PHL Second Class yet (not a large enough subscriber base) and we can't afford First Class postage, so we're stuck with Third at the present.

Readers on the move should send us address changes at least two weeks before their address change will become permanent, along with the date they'll be at the new address. While getting back issues isn't a big problem, it's expensive for us and we appreciate it very much to get address changes in advance.

Dear Sirs,

I just learned of your existence in the last issue (literally) of The Alliance Newsletter, and wish to become a subscriber. Enclosed please find my check in the amount of $24.

Thank you,
Martin Sandry, Ph.D.
Chicago, IL

Every month we report on the demise of another Apple II publication (literally). We are relying on the support of our readers in telling others about us.

Encourage your friends to take a look at us. Our find-new-subscribers budget is pretty low, so if you like our work, please help us out by telling others. We really appreciate the many favorable comments readers have made.

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THE PASSPORT HOUSE LETTER

Journal of Apple II Development • September, 1993

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BACK ISSUES & OTHER INFORMATION

The Passport House Letter has been printed every month since our premier issue of January 1993. Back issues are available for $2 each; some issues may no longer be in print but we can send you a photocopy or put you on our reprint waiting list. Our "regular address" appears in each issue on page two, with any current public Email addresses available. Please feel welcome to contact us with any suggestions, problems, news or other corrospondence. Due to the volume of mail we get, we can't always reply directly, but we do consider all mail and appreciate any comments from our readers. Email is the most effective way to contact us.

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The Editors' Letter

Issue Details

We've strayed from our scheduled issue plan (see "Where's...?" below)—instead, this month marks the first installment of a series of articles on the online services that support Apple II computers. With less support available from conventional channels, it's important to take note of what help is available from the online services.

To start off the series properly, we've included a Special Report entitled "Getting Started Online." It supplies additional information on what you'll need to get into telecommunications (remember the articles we printed back in March? You might want to dig that issue out and go back over it along with the new articles presented here). The Special Report in this issue focuses on saving money while doing the online thing—you don't have to blow your pockets out to benefit from the help available online.

Dan's Big Telecommunication Hassle

Speaking of blowing pockets and telecommunications—or resurrecting the subject—I myself (publisher Dan Dilger) just spent some wild amounts of cash online. Don't do this at home, folks—I combined the following materials: a 1200 baud modem, schlock telecommunications software, a remote location and a research commission. Dang! What a way to blow a paycheck.

Living as I currently do at the House of Passport, in Miles City, MT (where's that? Go really Far North, and then, when you hit Billings-I-wish-I-were-a-real-city-Montana, go 150 miles towards No-where-rth Dakota. And don't blink or you'll miss it), it's not hard to understand that most telecommunications are gonna be long distance operations. Couple that with the fact that my (brand new, even) regular modem just kicked off, and you start to see the problem. And without my regular term program, I was faced with the added problem of getting some urgent research done for the *Letter*.

Without access to another modem, and absolutely no other recourse, I spent the entire day online, going back and forth between AppleWorks GS' unfinished telecom module (it has a nice review buffer, but very limited transfer protocol ability) and a freeware utility that had, in the past, served as a competently quick and dirty Z-Modem tool. Of course, the freeware decided it was time to flake (it apparently could sense the stress of the situation and responded as any object does under the circumstances). Z-Modem at 1200 was the fastest I could pump information, but now I'd have to take a demotion to Y-Modem (only a little better than X-Modem).

I started figuring up how much it was costing me, but then decided to not worry. I'll have to take out a loan when my phone bill comes. Our article "Special Report: Getting Started Online" may assist you in spending a lot less money in your own telecommunications work.

Where's the Educator's issue?

Last month we had referred to plans for our special "September" issue, featuring a special article for the benefit of educators with Apple IIs. With the thousands of IIs in schools already, it makes sense to target these users with help and information on how they can best put the II to work. The article will highlight some of the things IIs do best, and what simple upgrades will do the most to take advantage of the Apple II's strong points. Many educators would like to use the technology they have, but don't have much in the way of information resources to draw upon in order to know what to do.

So where is the article? It's been bumped back several weeks, but still waiting. We're planning to publish the special issue in our November issue. Till then, you can still send in the name of schools you'd like to see receive a copy. Do you know kids in schools that use Apple IIs? Send us the name and address of their school and we'll forward them a free copy of the special issue.

Dan's Big Video Display Hassle

Well, here's a second problem going on in my life—my primary system I use to compile and layout pages for the publication, a IIGS, decided it was time to throw a wrench into my deadlines. The monitor, a standard Apple IIGS RGB, had been flaking out on me for some time, but finally chose to do a complete harry cary. When I turned it on, it displayed an intensely neon green screen from corner to corner.

"Great timing," I thought, hoping that the situation was temporary or just required a simple adjustment. So I started turning one of the knobs on the back (that adjust the horizontal hold and stuff) and out from the monitor comes this louder and louder electronic whine. I could just imagine, being contorted around over the blaring green screen to reach back there, that my internal organs were getting microwaved into unbrowned dishes even a true cannibal would turn his nose up at.

Suddenly—as I was turning the knob—the screen, which is turning to a brilliant blue-green as I turn, zaps off. I turned the monitor switch off and back on again, and it went back to doing the green display thing. At this point I'm starting to consider that it's a permanent situation, and mentally figuring how much this is going to cost me.

I originally paid something like $500 for the monitor; it was part of the whole IIGS bundle I got back in 1987 and, as part of a bundle I was excited in getting, I didn't think of how much it really cost. A new Apple monitor was out of the question. I remembered seeing that Quality Computers had a Magnavox RGB monitor that doubles as a television monitor; so if I bought it, I could hook it up to a VCR and use it as a TV as well. It was right at $300, and required a special cable (sold separately, of course) for another $20. I called about it only to find that there wouldn't be any in stock for like two weeks. Other companies were selling replacement Apple monitors (refurbished) for around $225—still a lot to me, even though about half of the new price. I was about to give up hope on my personal Gran Ruggman Bill I had made for getting my credit cards paid off and just bill up another several hundred dollars for a monitor

Then I thought of hooking up a standard television. I have access to a pretty nice direct-view big screen TV (not like the faded-out kind of rear projection *really* big screens), so I hooked it up to the IIGS' composite video and worked for some time with the setup—over a month. Remember, it isn't games and fun I'm doing on this IIGS and TV setup—this is setting up twelve pages of the *Passport House Letter*.

Editors' Letter continues on page 8

Service Test Drive

GEnie Online Services

A2, A2Pro RoundTables	BB, Conference, Library files
GEnie Information Services	——
P.O. Box 6403	Telecommunication service
Rockville, MD 20850	Modem, telecom software
(800) 638-9636	$8.95/month

A series of reports covering the various online services that support the Apple II will be printed in coming issues.

Passport House values the support online services supply to the Apple II community, and we'd like to inform our readers as to how they can benefit from being online and what they can expect from the services.

These services, such as America Online, DELPHI, CompuServe and GEnie, offer computer users a variety of useful functions: they provide qualified help and assistance, supply access to a database of data and program files and support real-time conferences between users.

We'll examine the specific features that each of the different online services provide and compare them based on service, usefulness and price.

Some, or possibly many, of our readers are not familiar with telecommunications at all, so we've compiled a companion Special Report, entitled "Getting Started Online," to provide helpful information on what is needed to hook up and join the online community.

We hope you'll enjoy this series of articles. Of course, we'll print any comments our readers write in with, so if you've developed a loving loyalty to one of the onlines, write us and tell us why.

GEnie is a large computer system that registered users can access for information, files and help. GEnie is huge. The entire system is broken down into special interest groups, called "RoundTables," organized for various subjects, from computer interests to financial information to hobby groups and more.

"A2" and "A2pro" are the two RoundTables GEnie supports for the Apple II. A2, the basic RT, supplies general interest information for all Apple II users, while A2pro is designed for users interested in technical information and programming. Once you sign up with a GEnie account (the accompanying article "Special Report: Getting Started Online" has details on that), you can visit both A2 and A2pro without any special charges or registration. In our Test Drive, we'll first look at A2, and then feature the additional resources available from its sister RT A2pro.

The GEnie Apple II RT

GEnie is arranged into "pages." Each page introduces a menu of choices to select from to get information, download something or get to another menu. The A2 RT is page 530. From most GEnie prompts, you can enter either "A2" or "m530" (m is for "move") to get to the A2 RT.

Upon arriving at A2, a list of messages introduce the RT, usually commenting on special conferences or other activities that have been scheduled, and a list of new files available in the database library you might want to examine.

The Bulletin Board

The first option of the main menu that then appears sends you into GEnie's A2 BB (all GEnie RT's share a similar interface for reading, sending and searching for bulletin board messages). Here's the standard BB menu for RT's:

```
Category  [Category number, name]

1. CATegories          10. INDex of topics
2. NEW messages        11. SEArch topics
3. SET category        12. DELete message
4. DEScribe CAT        13. IGNore category
5. TOPic list          14. PROmpt setting
6. BROwse new msgs     15. SCRoll setting
7. READ messages       16. NAMe used in BB
8. REPly to topic      17. EXIt the BB
9. STArt a topic       18. HELp on commands
Enter #, <Command> or <HEL>p
```

On GEnie, messages are divided by category. List the categories (enter 1) and then use option 3 to choose one to attend. Choose 4 for a description of the current category. A2 sports fourty-six different categories, covering the various Apple II developers available on GEnie and other special interest groups.

Each category is broken into topics, so after attending a category, list the topics (5). You can also list just topics with new messages (2). A topic list will note the topic names, number of messages in each, and the name of the person who started the topic. Here's an example of a "TOPic list" from the C. V. Tech Category (a closed topic is one you can't leave messages in):

```
No.  Subject                          Msgs  Status  Author
  1  About C.V. Technologies Online      1  Closed  A2.HELP
  2  RamFAST-SCSI                      203  Open    A2.DEAN
  4  Upcoming products                  43  Open    A2.DEAN
  5  Common questions and answers       72  Open    A2.DEAN
  6  C.V. Technologies' GSMemory Card   97  Open    A2.DEAN
```

...and the result of selecting "NEW messages":

```
103  new msgs in topic 2: "RamFAST-SCSI"
 17  new msgs in topic 6: "C.V. Technologies' GSMemory Card"
```

From a selected topic, you can choose to read all of the messages, specific messages by number or just new ones you haven't already read (GEnie keeps track).

To leave a message, either STArt a new topic, or REply to the topic you want it to appear in. GEnie then prompts you to type in your message. Your message is automatically stamped with your name and the time and date and enters it into the chosen topic.

People post a lot of questions for someone else in-the-know to answer. There are a lot of people "in the know" on GEnie, and this often results in a lot of duplicate answers to the question. Because it takes a minute or two to type a message in, several people may simultaneously answer the same question with the same answer, unaware that it has already been answered.

That results in many topics being deluged with hundreds of messages, many of which are duplicate or just plain boring. Unfortunately, there isn't any way to know who sent a specific message or what it is about without getting the whole message. GEnie doesn't support message threading, so you'll often have to slog through a lot of drivel to find interesting points or the good answers from smart people. But answers are often so good that it's worth it.

To assist in keeping the BBS from stagnating in old messages, A2 sysops will save large chunks of old messages as text files in the A2 library (more on the library later) and delete them from the topic. However, there isn't any way to rope of a section of messages to save as a file for yourself to download, so until a batch of old messages are offloaded into the library (which can take as much as several months), there isn't any way to quickly download them as a compressed file; the only option is to list out a topic's messages—and that can take a lot of time.

Getting interesting information from the BBS takes some searching (and costs online time), but you can find answers for all kinds of questions.

Of course, you can always just leave your question in a topic and check back later for an answer. However, it's good to check and see if the question has already been asked—and answered—before. It's irritating to read the same question from several different people when the answer is already there.

Option 2: Conferences

The conference area is a place where people can meet to discuss anything. Just choose the menu options leading to a conference room (A2 has multiple rooms you can attend) and start talking. Of course, it's very boring to talk in a room all alone, so you'll want to make some sort of arrangements to meet people there.

Rooms operate like CB channels; anyone can enter a room (GEnie announces each person as they enter and exit) and get involved in the conversation. Unless you are an extremely fast typist, there'll be some lag between when you get an idea and when you send it, but everything you type in will be sent to everyone currently in the room.

GEnie holds formal conferences regularly. These conferences are moderated, and often center on an interesting person, like a programmer or a representative from an Apple II company. Transcripts of formal conferences are saved in the library, so even if you miss it, you can read through everything that took place.

The Library

Perhaps the most popular and useful place in the A2 RT is the library. Here you'll find over 21,000 files for your perusal. Besides getting files ("downloading"), you can "upload" your own files to the library for public examination. But first, a brief note on how the library works.

The library is arranged in a somewhat similar fashion as the BB; files are separated into categories called "libraries." There are sixty-four different libraries. Here's the A2 RT Library main menu:

```
          Apple ][ RoundTable Software Library
           Library: [current library]
 1.  Description of this Library
 2.  Directory of Files
 3.  Search File Directory
 4.  Browse through Files
 5.  Upload a New File
 6.  Download a File
 7.  Delete a File You Own
 8.  Set Software Library
 9.  Save Current Software Library
10.  Instructions for Software Exchange
11.  Directory of New Files
12.  Join/Ignore Library Category
```

Each library file is given a short description (a short phrase) and a long description (several lines of detail), and is associated with several keywords. You can search for a file to download either from a specific library or all the A2 libraries collectively. Search by a keyword ("clipart") or uploader (BURGER.BILL), or list entire libraries.

Both searches and list operations (selections 2 and 11) produce a library listing, which includes each file's number, name, uploader name, upload date, number of times people have downloaded it, its library and the short description:

```
 No. File Name       Type Address    YYMMDD  Bytes  Access Lib
21166 SYS402.8BIT.BXY  X  A2-CENTRAL 930811  105344    91   32
      Desc: Apple II System Disk 4.0.2 (8 bit)
```

With the file's number, you can do a browse operation to read its long description and download it. To download, you'll need a terminal program that features a standard file transfer protocol, either X-modem, Y-modem or Z-modem. X and Y-modem are pretty slow; if you can, you'll want to use Z-modem. After choosing the protocol and performing the download, you'll simply have to process the file (to remove the Binary II wrapper and data compression) before you can use it. That can be accomplished with the freeware program Shrink-It.

A wealth of files are available, from data files—like the conference transcripts and old message archives previously noted—to utilities, useful applications, games and other shareware, freeware and public domain work.

Downloading doesn't cost extra, but it does take time that is included in hourly charges. For this reason, you might want to obtain some large, readily available software programs from computer clubs or other sources rather than downloading everything that looks interesting.

The A2Pro RT

GEnie's A2Pro RT is almost identical to A2 in setup; its content is just more advanced. A2Pro sysops are quick to point out that all are welcome in A2Pro—you don't have to be a programmer. In fact, you'll not only find a wealth of technical information in A2Pro, but also clear explanations from qualified sources—after all, genius simplifies, ignorance complicates.

Answers to technical questions can often be found in the bulletin board, as well as discussions regarding new development products. Conferences in A2Pro are more technical and programming oriented, often covering new programmer's tools and techniques.

A2Pro's fifty different libraries provide a lifetime of source code to examine, Apple tech notes and exclusive archives of programmer journals now out of print, such as the recently obtained back issues to *Apple Assembly Line* and *8/16 Central*. If you're interested in learning to program, or desiring to learn a new language, no doubt you'll find a lot of assistance available from A2Pro.

GEnie at a glance

GEnie services are priced at $8.95 per month, which includes four hours of non-prime time use.

Test Drive continues on page 8

Getting Started Online

There isn't a lot involved with getting online. After all, the online services work to make it as easy as possible for people to sign up. Still, there are some things you'll want to know before you jump into the world of telecommunications.

One of the first and most important things you'll want to consider is cost. In this Special Report, we'll present the basic things you'll need to hook up, but focus primarily on how you can minimize costs related to getting online.

For additional information on the world of telecommunications, see the articles "Test Drive: The Telecom Road Trip," "Using the AT command Set," "Standards and Protocol" and "Getting Online," all of which appeared in our March 1993 issue.

To do anything online, you'll need a modem for your computer, a telecommunications program and an account with one of the online services; pretty simple. However, to do anything really productive—and to avoid spending more money than necessary—you'll want to make sure you have the right stuff to work to accomplish the goals you have in mind. We'll start off our cost-conscience shopping trip in the realm of computer equipment.

Basic Computer Equipment

We'll start with the assumption that you'll be using an Apple II. Excellent choice; basic telecommunications don't require an expensive new system sporting all kinds of special frills. The Apple II has been telecommunicating for fifteen years now, and is aptly suited for the task.

For a Apple II model that comes without a modem port, you'll need a Super Serial Card (or compatible) interface. The IIc and IIGS have a serial port built in for communications, but they differ: the IIc has the equivalent of the Super Serial Card built in, while the IIGS is built with a different serial interface based on a Zilog Serial Communications Controller chip. This difference won't matter unless the communications software you use tries to directly talk with the serial interface hardware—IIGS users have to double check to make sure software will work on their computer. Most modern software will work without any problems.

The Data Set

Because the world's telephone system infrastructure was built decades before the dawn of the personal computer explosion, the wires now in place are inadequate for high speed data transfers. To communicate over the standard phone lines that are already in place, you'll have make your computer talk slowly and with an analog accent. That's what a modem is for—it accepts a relatively slow serial data stream from the computer and "modulates" it into a narrow bandwidth waveform that will acceptably carry over the technologically ancient wiring system designed for voice telephone.

Even fast modems transfer data at a snail's pace when compared, for example, to the faster SCSI interface, which operates both digitally and in parallel (several data lines transmit at once, rather than sending data on one line in serial). A file that takes a half hour to download with a modem can be saved to your hard drive in a matter of seconds. As soon as high-speed, long distance digital communications become a reality, even the fastest 14,400 baud modems will be considered laughable.

Still, as of today, 1200, 2400, 9600 and 14,400 baud modems are what Apple II users have to put up with—and what the online services support. When buying a modem, you'll have to weigh the baud rate (its speed expressed in bits per minute) against the price involved. It isn't simple; your decision will weigh upon several factors. Here are the main ones:

Modem affordability. Obviously, faster modems cost more. To start out with, you might look into a very cheap 1200 baud modem (but don't touch a 300 baud, no matter how cheap!). Some refurb and parts houses sell these slower (but still acceptable) modems for very little cost. For example, Alltech Electronics (619/721-7733) advertises both new and refurbished 1200 modems for around $20.

Rate Charges. The faster you can do your business online, the less time it will take—and the less access time you'll be charged. But the importance of this factor will depend on how you use your time as well. While a 9600 baud modem can transfer data as much as four times faster than a 2400 baud modem, it won't make much difference at all if you spend that time in conferences or other online "chat" services. That's because much of the time is taken up waiting for responses and typing in your own messages—tasks that have little bearing on the transmission speed. A faster modem will, however, make a very significant difference in straight data transmissions, such as when receiving blocks of text (as when navigating through menus) or when uploading and downloading files.

Extra Fees. Different services charge differently for online access. Many services charge an additional fee for 9600 baud access, for example. Services generally require you to access them with a different phone number for higher baud rates, and there are fewer of these high-speed access numbers available; so there's a greater chance you'll have to pay long distance charges (or pay higher long distance, if you already do) to access these numbers. Whether or not the extra long distance is worth it depends, again, upon how you use the service. By regulating your activities to make the most of your faster access rate, you might save on online charges even though you're paying higher access fees and additional long distance charges.

Support for Hardware Features. Many modems now feature data compression and error correction, and thus boast higher maximum throughput rates. But remember that those rates are only the maximum rates the modem can do. Most online services only support minimal error correction schemes, and rarely offer hardware data compression. That means that despite the advertising claims, the actual throughput you'll enjoy will be much closer to the actual rate of the modem. Check first with an online service to see what data compression and error correction schemes they support.

Telecommunications Software

A modem without telecommunications software is something like a printer without a word processor.

Yes, you can send basic commands to a modem and even log onto an online service from the AppleSoft prompt. However, to be effective, you'll want software specifically designed for the task at hand. Good telecommunications software supplies several basic features:

Phonebook and Auto-Dialing. These automate the task of connecting with an online service or other electronic "bulletin board" systems. These are generally able to store the phone number and associated connection information, like the data rate, under a selection that sets up everything for you when you dial.

Data Capture. Also referred to as scrollback or review buffer, this will keep an account of everything that appears on screen and allow you to save it as a file. You can then review what went on after disconnecting from the service. You won't have to read everything while connected, and that can save a lot of online time.

File Transfer Protocols. There are several standards for sending and receiving files. Rather than sending files in one big chunk, these protocols step in and monitor the transfer to prevent data corruption or other transmission problems from disrupting the file transfer process. The first of these protocols is X-Modem. It dates back from the Seventies, so it isn't very modern. While it does the job, it does it very slowly, so you won't want to use it unless you have no other alternative. Y-Modem is similar, although it allows for batch transfers (sending more than one file in one session). The transfer protocol of choice, though, is usually Z-Modem. It's much faster, but equally safe. In addition, if for any reason a file transfer using Z-Modem is interrupted, the transfer can be automatically resumed from the previous ending point. So if your terminal software supports Z-Modem transfers, you'll want to use it whenever possible for downloading or uploading files. Note that your software may only support one-way (receive) transfers for certain protocols.

Terminal Emulations. Of course, the very first telecommunicators were terminals, hardware systems with only simple input and output abilities that required connection to multiuser mainframes to be of any use. Several terminal protocols were devised for terminal-to-mainframe communication, one of the most popular being VT-100 (VT is for video terminal). These protocols allowed terminals to display character-based graphics (similar to MouseText) and translate the terminal codes received from the mainframe into screen redraws and text manipulation effects. Terminal software that claims VT-100, VT-52 or other terminal emulations will allow you to connect with computer systems that use the protocol and see the same screen display you'd get if you were working on a terminal.

Automatic Binary II. This feature makes things simpler for the end user by automatically wrapping files with Binary II when sending and unwrapping them when receiving. Binary II is an Apple II standard for saving ProDOS information inside the file, so it won't get lost while under the care of non-ProDOS file systems. If your terminal program doesn't support this, you'll need to apply a Binary II wrapper to files you plan to upload using a program like Shrink-It. That program will also unwrap Binary II files you download.

Everything Else

To help minimize the time you spend online, you might look at offline processor programs. These use your current telecommunications program to assist you in performing as much of your work as possible offline. For example, GEnie users can benefit from Co-Pilot and GEM, two off line processors that make use of ProTerm 3 and Point-to-Point, two popular telecom programs.

You'll also want a copy Shrink-It (mentioned above in regard to Binary II) or its IIGS equivalent, GSHK. In addition to handling Binary II, these will allow you to unpack the files you download (remove data compression) and pack files for uploading. Both are available from online services.

You shouldn't have any problems making a connection with a online service, but if you do, they all offer support hotline numbers you can call. And once you're on, there is often help available along the way.

Stay tuned for more details and comparisons of the online services in our Test Drive department. In the end, we'll do a final comparison and pick a wining online service for Apple II users.

If you're already online, be sure to contact us and tell us your opinion of who's best—we'll consider reader comments in making our judgement of the best online service for Apple II users.

Things to avoid

You'll want to be quick in adjusting to the online community. There are a few things that really irk people. One is typing in messages in ALL UPPERCASE LETTERS. Don't do it! And don't leave the same message in different categories on GEnie. You'll no doubt get "flamed." :)

Making the Connection

Here's some basic data to help you get online with the big services. You might check around in your immediate area for local BBS (bulletin board systems) you can access to get comfortable with telecommunications without spending for monthly access fees.

America Online
8619 Westwood Center Dr.
Vienna, VA 22182-2285
(800)827-6364

You'll need special software. The Apple II version, which works with both the IIe/IIc and the IIGS, uses a text based environment. On the IIGS, the software opens up with graphics before dumping you into the text editor, and some of the graphics screens are pretty sloppy. The current Apple II version, 1.22 (from 1989), could use an upgrade. But you'll need it anyway.

CompuServe
P.O. Box 20212
5000 Arlington Centre Blvd.
Columbus, OH 43220
(800)848-8990

Special Report continues on page 8

GEnie Online Services

Test Drive continues from page 5

Additional non-prime hours are $3 each. It is worth it? If you use it, it will be. You'll often find just what you were looking for in the A2/A2Pro libraries. Your questions will be answered and you'll learn new ways of doing things that will save you time. Any technical help priced at $3 per hour is a good deal.

In addition to A2 and A2Pro, you also gain access to all of the other RTs GEnie has to offer, as well as Email services, send fax and many other features. Sneak over to the Amiga RT and steal a couple MODs, or font and sound files from the Mac RT. There are a lot of non-computer related services available to choose from, too, from shopping to research.

GEnie isn't the largest online service (CompuServe is), but it does appear to offer the largest Apple II areas. It does lack full connection with the Internet, however, so to do more than Email across the Internet you'll have to look elsewhere.

Recently, GEnie changed their pricing structure, removing extra charges and registration for Internet Email (it's now included with all other standard features at $3 per hour.) For more information on the recent GEnie price restructuring, see the short article "New Products: GEnie revamped Online Services" in our July issue.

Getting Started Online

Special Report continues from page 7

Contact CompuServe for a temporary ID and password needed to sign up. If you just bought a modem, a signup package may have been included in the box.

DELPHI
General Videotex Corporation
1030 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138
(800)695-4005

With your modem, dial (800) 365-4636, press return once or twice and at the password prompt, enter CPT55 .

GEnie
P.O. Box 6403
Rockville, MD 20850-1785
(800)638-9636

Set your software (if settings are available) for 300, 1200 or 2400 baud, local echo ("half duplex"), 8 data bits, 1 stop bit, no parity ("8N1"). Use your modem to dial 1(800)638-8369 , or in Canada, 1(800)387-8330. When you connect, immediately type "HHH" (three capital H). When the " U#= " prompt appears, type XTX99017,APPLE and hit return.

Editors' Letter continues from page 3

Finally, I reached the point where I knew I'd have to do something else: I was going blind, getting headaches and approaching the loss of the TV—to my brother who owns it. So once more I resigned myself to the fact that several months of money originally slated for such luxuries as food and clothing was going into the New Monitor Fund.

Going back through the ads, I came across an listing in an Altech Ellectronics ad for an Atari ST monitor referred to as a "IIGS compatable." I called the company (619/721-7733) to find that the reconditioned monitor is an Atari SC1224, adjusted to work better with the IIGS, and with the old Atari connector replaced with a DB-15 IIGS conector. At $160 with shipping, it was the cheapest alternative, so I got it. So far, I'm very pleased with it.

Its speaker produces sound better than the IIGS' internal one (the IIGS RGB port has wires for sound, though the Apple monitor doesn't use it.) While the output doesn't rival a regular stereo hookup, it provides decent sound on the road.

Video output is just as good as Apple's; lines are sharp and colors are creamy smooth, without distracting vertical lines—even when in 620 mode. The box is a little larger, but it still fits atop the IIGS okay. After I put some miles on it, I'll write with details of what it's really like. It sure beats the TV.

Silly Comment of the Month

Steve Weyhrich, in his monthly compilation of interesting stuff from GEnie, *A2 News Digest*, recently made a statement truly worthy of the Silly Comment Prize, Goumbah Medal or both. Under the heading "More About inCider And A+ Publishing," in his August *Digest*, Weyhrich refers to A+ Publishing, the former staff of the now lily-sprouting *inCider/A+*.

In July, we wrote about the demise of inCider/A+ and its suspicious resurrection as *MacComputing*, in "The inCider/A+ thing: funny and scary both." But *MacComputing* immediately disappeared as well. Weyhrich noted that the A+ Publishing staff was dismissed "only one hour after the first copy" was sent to be printed.

Why would the controlling company (MACWORLD) and parent (IDG) throw out two babies and the bath water staff?

"Apparently," theorizes Weyhrich, "there is some fear and trembling in the Macintosh magazine community, considering the imminent release of the PowerPC, that Apple is going to treat the Mac the way they did the Apple II." He then goes on to speak of developers slowing their development of Mac products, and less advertising dollars. "In the deja vu sense," he says, it's similar to "the mid 1980's, when there were several Apple II magazines, and they began disappearing as the decade concluded."

Or perhaps not. Why would a sudden dollar crunch affect *MacComputing* in such a fatal way, without so much as even denting mother *MACWORLD* —or *MacUser*, *The Mac Home Journal* (or whatever it is) and all of the other Mac-azines around?

Perhaps the connection to be made is not between the history of the Apple II and the perceived status of the Mac, but rather between the arrogant editorials, sloppy journalism and we-don't-need-to-be-accurate-because-we-are-an-authority attitude displayed in the last couple years at *inCider/A+* and the similar schlock served up in the reincarnate Mac version—the common thread being A+ Publishing, the staff that trashed the Apple II's only commercial magazine like college kids on spring break. Get real. A more responsible staff would still be publishing.

The Passport House Catalogue

First of the F/Volumes available through Passport House

The first series of floptical issues are now available from F/Volume. Floptical users now have a great way to gain access to large amounts of data and programming without shuffling hundreds of floppies.

F/Volume has compiled shareware, freeware and public domain programming, data and general information expressly for use on floptical media. The volumes are organized intelligently; so you'll be able to easily browse through volumes without getting lost. In addition, help files are available to assist you in using the files on each volume.

F/Volumes available:

1 GS/OS System Resources, Vol 1

MEGABYTES of stuff for your system disk, including can't-live-without utilities, desk accessories, init files (system extentions), fonts, sound resource files, control panels, fixes and more.

2 Graphics Resources, Vol 1

Not only hundreds of pictures to peruse, but utilities to view special formats, like 3200 color graphics, and translate from foreign file types.

3 Sound Resources, Vol 1

NoiseTracker, SoundSmith, MIDISynth, MODs and more. Plus all sorts of instrument files, sound utilities, translator applications. Make your Ensoniq sweat with this collection of wall-rattling tunes, notes and sound effects.

4 Games and Entertainment, Vol 1

Looking for new games out there? Here's a great place to start. Plus game cheats and extra levels for selected commercial games, and unbelieveable audio-visual presentations for your entertainment.

5 Programmer's Utilities and Resources, Vol 1

A collection of useful information and programming resources for both new and experienced programmers (and anyone just plain interested in anything techincal).

F/Volumes

To make use of these F/Volumes, you'll need access to a floptical drive. Many programs on these F/Volumes require System 6, which you should have by now anyway if you use a IIGS. Apple IIe users interested in 8-bit F/Volumes should contact the company; none are yet available.

Besides reliable, organized access to lots of data, you'll get no errors, guarenteed with a 30-day warranty on media, and a very low price for access to this kind of information.

How to order

You can either send in your own floptical disks to use, or pay a $25 deposit per title you wish to order. F/Volume contents can be copied to a hard drive, leaving you with floptical media useful for backups, archives or simply general data storage.

The processing fee charged for F/Volume titles is just $9.95 each, or $7.50 when you purchase more than four at once

To order by mail, send check or money order to Passport House (address on inside of front cover) If you have a checking account, you can also call to place your order *by phone*. F/Volume will charge your checking account—you don't even need a credit card for this instant billing service. Have your check book handy when you place your call.

To order, call Cottage Phone at (406) 232-7852. Please call or Email Passport House for details before sending in any floptical media. F/Volumes are batch shipped; allow 3 to 6 weeks for delivery.

Watch for these F/Volumes from other software sources.

Readers' Listings for September

Last month, we introduced a new listing service to assist our readers in finding others interested in buying, selling or trading Apple II stuff, or simply making an announcement.

The service is free. Simply send your listing to us Email or on a postcard—in fifteen words or less. (For more than that, you'd better send $5)

We'll print your listing and forward responses to you (so be sure to include a phone number or Email address) When responding, include the box ID and the month it appeared.

Box A
Passport House does listings for FREE.

Check it out:

CD JEWEL CASES

One of the great things about compact disc—besides the dynamic range, frequency response and instant accesss—is the simple, yet functional hard plastic package. These "jewel cases" help protect against dust and make them easy to stack—and, there are all sorts of organizers designed to make finding the album you want easy.

Passport House has found a supply of these useful jewel cases designed especially for 3.5" computer disks. They're great for getting piles of floppies into order, and out of the way of dust and dirt. These cases are the same size as standard CD jewel cases, but sport a modified insert that securely holds a single 3.5" disk.

Just like the CD version, they'll hold an insert in front as well as in back. Print out a listing of the files on the disk and stick it under the plastic cover. They're great!

They're not the same as the smaller 3.5" mini-jewel cases like the ones DreamWorld used to distribute the limited edition DuelTris. These seem to be a little more rigid and harder to crack.

Please contact us if you'd like to obtain a supply of these for your own use. If there is enough interest in volume, we could distribute them for, say $15 for a pack of ten. The standard CD cases you can occasionally find in stores are usually about $2 (and they don't hold a microfloppy!)

Developers: these would make really cool cases for distributing your software. A leaflet, small booklet manual or foldout will fit under inside the front cover, and an additional paper will fit behind the center insert. They're easy to ship, too.

New Product Reports

Paper Free
Econ Technonlgies, Inc.
P.O. Box 195356
Winter Springs, FL 32719
(407) 365-4209

Paper Free is a GS/OS port driver that lets you examine what a document will look like when printed out without printing it out. Instead, the file is printed electronically. Paper Free allows you to direct the results of a print job into a file, rather than to a printer. You can then examine the file to see how your document will really look (as opposed to the "WYSI almost WYG" screen display of the IIGS). Econ plans to have Paper Free out by "late summer." We'll print more details as they become available. Econ has given Paper Free a retail price of $39.95.

How does it work? To understand, take a look at GS/OS printing: the GS/OS Print Manager gives the selected printer driver you select in the "DC-Printer" control panel access to the screen. The driver then translates the IIGS' graphic screen into information that the printer it was written for can understand. The Print Manager then dumps this information on the port driver you select, also in the "DC-Printer" control panel. The port driver transfers the data to the printer. However, port drivers don't have to send the information to the printer necessarily, and that's how Paper Free works. Instead of sending the document to a printer, it redirects it to be saved as a special file.

GNO/ME 2.0
Procyon Enterprises
1200 Diamond Cir
Lafayette, CO 80026
(800) 759-4549

GNO/ME is an implementation of the UNIX operating system for the IIGS. It claims "full support for all features of UNIX;" the GNO/ME package includes the kernel, multitasking shell, a "miniShell" NDA, which allows access to shell functions within a desktop program, password-protected accounts, named prefixes, 6 methods of inter-process communication, and even the ability to launch non-compatible programs without going through a second program launcher. The new 2.0 has just been unveiled and will be detailed in our next issue.

MODZap v0.90 b3
Ian Schmidt (irsman@aol.com)
Freeware

Ian Schmidt recently finished a new version of his MODZap freeware jukebox designed to play MOD song files from the Amiga and IBM. The new version includes the following features (as posted by Ian on USENET / INFO-APPLE):

•Second-generation self-synching loop-mode swapper with DOC caching support for sound every bit as good as ShellPlay (better in some cases).

•All supported effect commands are interpreted correctly, as per ProTracker on the Amiga.

•There are 3 new player modes, which include several kinds of o'scopes. Note that MODZap's code supports a background picture behind the scopes, although due to lack of artistic talent I didn't put one in (anyone?).

•You may now access your Classic Desk Accessories from inside MODZap, such as Ensoniq Peeker and What's Up DOC?.

•Now supports 5-octave MODs created on IBMs and other non-Amiga machines (not supported in any other IIGS player at this time!).

•Stereo Mixing now works fine, and Full Stereo mode gives you a special higher sound quality (same as the -S200 option in shellplay 0.71).

•Compatible with GNO 1.0 (Jawaid [Bayzar, GNO/ME's author] worked around this in 2.0 anyway, but it's still nice to have).

What's up DOC?
Andre Prellwitz (andrep@ucbvax.Berkeley.EDU)
Freeware

Responding to Ian's post in the newsgroup, Andre Prellwitz writes: "Could you please post Ensoniq Peeker? I am on the verge of posting What's Up DOC (as I was working on it today by coincidence) and would like to see what the competition has done. What's Up, DOC? displays info on each of the 32 oscillators: raw frequency, volume, DOC address, channel, osc. mode, interrupt status, and a volume meter. It also has stereo VU meters which become more accurate the faster your machine runs (thanks to my hard work today) and does this all at 60 updates/second."

Prellwitz also asks about IIGS ROM 01 noise in relation to MODZap in this month's Late News.

QuicKare+
Drive-Check
Vitesse, Inc.
P.O. Box 929
La Puente, CA 91747-0929
(800) 777-7344

QuicKare+ is a package designed to clean your mouse, scanner, 5.25" and 3.5" floppy drives. The kit includes special cleaning swabs for your mouse and scanner rollers, with environmentally safe cleaning solution designed to prevent cracking or drying of rubber rollers; the floppy disk head cleaners make drives last longer and reduce the chance of disk media being scratched by dust on the drive heads. VItesse' price is $9.95 plus $3 shipping and handling. Also available is QuicKare, with the same supplies to cleaning mouse and scanner but without drive cleaner disks at $5.95 plus $3 shipping and handling.

Drive-Check is floppy drive test software designed to check the condition of 5.25" and 3.5" floppy disk drives. Drive-Check looks at the drive's rotational speed and monitors the read/write head for proper stepping through disk tracks and read and write operations. It also checks header and sector information written to floppies. Retail price is $15.95 but Vitesse now has a special introductory offer of $9.95 plus $3 shipping.

CV Tech products, service now at Sequential

CV Tech, whose products include the RamFAST DMA + RAM cache SCSI card and the only IIGS RAM card with DMA-compatible expansion up to 8 MB, is leaving its products in the care of Sequential Systems. Sequential will now manufacture, sell and support the products, and be the sole source for technical support and future upgrades.

Sequential itself supports a large line of Apple II products, including print buffers, network switchers and the least expensive IIGS RAM expansion card available (the 4 MB card is currently advertised as low as $99; compare to 4 MB of Mac SIMM modules at right around $165). You can contact the company at:

1200 Diamond Cir.
Lafayette, CO 80026
(800) 759-4549

New source for DuelTris

DreamWorld Software's two player falling tiles game (see "Test Drive: Limited Edition DuelTris" in the May 1993 issue) that has been available only upon request from DreamWorld, will now be available from Big Red Computer Club. BRCC distributes many different titles for both 8 and 16-bit Apple II users.

The price is still the same: $20. That's for the "Limited Edition" version that comes packaged in a micro jewel case and printed manual. Here's how to contact both DreamWorld or Big Red:

DreamWorld Software
PO Box 830
Iowa City, IA 52244-0830

Big Red Computer Club
423 Norfolk Ave
Norfolk, NE 68701
(402) 379-4680

Vitesse announces special summer prices

Vitesse is offering a special price for used models of their Quickie hand held scanner. The company says the scanners have undergone a complete checking, with damaged or worn parts being replaced,. so they look and work like new. The refurbished Quickies carry the company's standard one year guarantee.

The scanners ship with Quickie version 3.1 GS/OS software and Quickie 1.2 ProDOS-8 software for IIe users. The GS/OS 3.1 version was just recently released. Besides improved gray dithering, the new version sports a free-form lasso selector and text editing tool; users can perform cut and paste, rotate, resize and fat bit edits on scans. For image sources larger than the scan head, multiple scans can be made and pasted together to produce one seamless image.

Quantities are limited on the refurbished Quickies; Vitesse has set special limited pricing at $129.00 plus $5.00 shipping and handling. (Ask for stock number RBQ1289)

Vitesse is also offering "plug and play" packages for IIGS users that include their Harmonie-HP print drivers along with the Hewlett Packard printer of your choice, including:

•The DeskJet 500 black ink jet; DeskJet 500C color ink jet and DeskJet 550C color ink jet (an improved version of DJ 500C, it uses separate black and color ink cartridges for better black printing in color documents)

•DeskWriter 500C color ink jet; DeskWriter 550C color ink jet (improved version of DW 500C, uses separate black and color ink cartridges for better blacks in color documents)

•LaserJet 4L black laser printer

Note that DeskJet printers will work with 8-bit programs (like AppleWorks Classic) without the Harmonie drivers; IIGS users will need the drivers to print with any GS/OS programs. Macintosh users can use any of the printers with third party drivers, but the DeskWriters are designed especially for the Mac; they're "QuickDraw" printers, like the StyleWriter, and will only work with printer drivers designed especially for them They won't accept a generic text dump output from AppleWorks or similar text-oriented programs. The DeskJet printers will, so if you use both GS/OS and 8-Bit software, you can good output from both using the DeskJet printers.

Here's a recap on prices (note that Vitesse supplies DeskJets and the LaserJet with six foot cable; DeskJets don't come with one).

DeskJet 500 with HP drivers and cable $439
DeskWriter 500C with HP drivers $529
DeskJet 500C with HP drivers and cable $569
DeskWriter 550C with HP drivers $759
DeskJet 550C with HP drivers and cable $759
LaserJet 4L with HP drivers and cable $739
IIGS to DeskWriter cable $9.98

Vitesse' three different Harmonie print driver packages are also available alone at reduced prices. Vitesse sells a complete Harmonie package that includes of all their drivers; Harmonie HP, which includes only drivers for Hewlett Packard printers and PerfectImage, the Vitesse driver for the Apple ImageWriter printers.

Harmonie $29.98
Harmonie-HP $14.98
PerfectImage $14.98

Contact Vitesse for more information on these specials, or for information on other printer+driver package options.

Vitesse, Inc.
P.O. Box 929
La Puente, CA 91747-0929
(800) 777-7344

Updates on the Horizon

What do Talk is Cheap, Micol Advanced BASIC, HyperStudio and (well, almost) AppleWorks Classic all have in common? An planned upgrade in their not so distant future.

A Bug in the Bug Fix

The changes Apple made to the Font Manager that resulted in a compatibility problem for TrueType also resulted in a third party bug fix. Nathan Mates, a

summer intern working for SoftDisk Publishing, produced a work around patch and uploaded it across the Internet as freeware—it's also on many of the commercial online services. But why is there a second version of the patch floating around now?

"Apparently," wrote Joe Kohn in a USENET / INFO-APPLE newsgroup message, "after Nathan Mates wrote his FontFixer, someone disassembled it, and found out that Nathan had broken a rule himself. So, it was updated, and the fix was fixed."

According to Steven Nelson (steven-nelson@uiowa.edu), the file fixfontmgr.shk is the original fix by Nathan Mates. The redo fix was produced by Barnabas.

So get the new fixfont file; it comes with two documentation files and an appended name. If you cant find it anywhere else, it's available for FTP. Get a friend to look in /3/apple2/apple16/utils/binaries at grind.isca.uiowa.edu for you if you lack access to the Internet.

When a Bug isn't a Bug

Appropriate excitement over the latest revision in GS/OS System Software was cut short by the complaints of 6.0.1's bugs. Often noted as a minor "bug" is the action of the system folder following magic routing.

"Magic routing" is Apple's description of a Finder intelligent enough to know that some files belong in a certain place inside the system folder. Thus, when you copy desk accessories, inits or control panels to the current system folder, they get automatically put where they belong. In the Finder, the current system folder—the one you started up from—is separated from other folders that have the name "system" by designation of a large Apple icon. You can only do magic routing with an active system folder.

Users have reported that, after doing some magic routing, the special icon disappears and the magic stops. What's really bad is that several people who should know better have jumped in and called the action a "bug," adding that it can be circumvented by dragging the system folder onto the desktop.

But the action most certainly isn't a bug. Any time the current system folder is modified, the system is potentially live for a conflict. That's why the Installer forces you to reboot after installing anything into the current system folder.

The fact that magic routing is turned off and the "I'm special" icon is stripped from the folder after any magic routing occurs seems very consistent with Apple's policy of always being super safe with regard to system files.

MODZap vs the ROM 01 IIGS

Regarding the freeware MODZap by Ian Schmidt, Andre Prellwitz (andrep@ucbvax.Berkeley.EDU) made the comment: "Please don't take this as a flame, but my ZipGS 7 ROM 1 clearly plays a lot of popping noise with [MODZap] 0.9. Perhaps there is something in your ROM 03 which is different and therefore masks this popping. I dunno if it's my computer, either, so I'm asking other ROM 1 users if they've noticed this. Perhaps it's a bug caused by over-optimizing the [MODZap] code."

So what's the deal with noisy IIGS sound? Steve Craft (scraft@trident.usacs.rutgers.edu) writes: "You talked about sound hiss and/or popping. Maybe it's because of the noisiness of your ROM 01 or a card inside. I know ROM 3 machines digitize better because the logical chip layout on the motherboard reduces [Radio Frequency] interference/noise inside the case. Who knows?"

Paul Creager (wily@shakala.com) responds "But soniqTracker and Shellplay don't pop or hiss (as much?). Ian is probably right about the "looping" instruments causing pops... From what I've read, the ROM 1 motherboard was "noisy". The cleaned-up/redesigned ROM 3 motherboard alleviated the problem. BTW [by the way] I have a ROM 3 and all my sounds come out clean."

An Apple Technote on the subject of IIGS sound noted that pops (which can sound more like static when they occur in samples played back at higher frequency) are related to the Ensoniq DOC (Digital Oscillator Chip—the IIGS' sound microprocessor) and one of its oscillator modes. The biggest reason the noise is more evident in the original ROM 01 than the revised ROM 3 IIGS is that the ROM 3 has twice the dedicated sound RAM for the DOC to work with and thus it can have larger buffers.

New NoiseTracker?

On the subject of IIGS sound, Dr. Tom Turley has released NoiseTracker 1.2. Apparently the release is the technical equivalent of the previously available NoiseTracker 1.1 that was worked over by Ian Schmidt, author of MODZap.

The "new" NoiseTracker 1.2 is identified with the 1 World Software Wizards who, it is understood, plan to eventually release a commercial NT 2.0—and don't want any confusion concerning NT's copywrite.

The Passport House Letter
PO Box 145
Miles City, MT 59301-0145 USA

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U.S. Postage
PAID
Miles City, MT 59301
Permit # 3

It's made people VERY, VERY SEXY

What a difference reading *The Passport House Letter* makes! Don't miss a single issue—sign up details can be found inside the front cover.

Actual results may vary. Past performance should not be considered as an indication of future yields.